Dynamics Between Virtual Teaching And Effective Knowledge Process For Hotel Management Students During Covid19 Pandemic

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Abstract

In the year 2020, Pandemic COVID-19, a novel coronavirus disease, halted and seized the operations of all the industries and educational institutions on a global level. During the lockdown, educational setups looked for an alternative to offline classes. As a result, children and young adults of schools and colleges switched over to an online teaching setup, regardless of its nomenclature of recreational or practical courses.

The adoption of the online teaching method led the researcher to write this paper to examine students' perception and preference towards the offline and online classes teachings..

A close-ended questionnaire was distributed via Google forms to the students of various hotel management institutes across the nation to have a country-wide inclusion to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on online education in India. The survey focussed on judging the effectiveness of online learning as a substitute for a skill-based course in hotel. This study analyzed online studying from a student perspective to track the positivity and negativity of online education.

This research paper intends to determine student satisfaction while attending online classes in a practical skill-based course like hotel.

Key Terms: Curriculum, Effectiveness, IHMs, , Online Teaching

Introduction

An ongoing crisis of COVID-19 spread rapidly all over the globe, leaving people bewildered. It was found that Coronavirus is caused by the transmission of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (WHO, 2020). The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the spread of Coronavirus as a pandemic on January 11th, 2020. According to Huand et al. (2020), this Virus originated from Wuhan city of China.

COVID has disrupted all sectors on a global scale and led to market crashes with the worst phase of economies ever. In India, Lockdown news crashed the market, with a 23% fall in Sensex and 14.6 lakh wealth-getting destroyed utterly. The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in India was essentially disruptive. According to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, India's growth in the fourth quarter of 2020 decreased to 3.1%.

Indian airlines and airports incurred financial losses worth Rs 22,400 crore in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic(Times, 2020). The financial growth fell in factories, shops, industries and organizations with no business resulting in no income.

The country's educational institute shut offline operations for the students and was instructed to remain closed till March 31st (TOI-Online, 2020). Though the instructions were given till March 31st, later it was extended till May 1st, and it kept extending, resulting in massive losses. 14.3 crore primary school students, 13.3 middle school students and 3.4 crore graduates, and postgraduate students were affected due to COVID-19; almost 32 crores students were impacted. (UNESCO) This led to the adoption of alternative methods to stream the learning process, especially the online teaching model that came into existence. The academic committee of colleges was involved in updating of syllabus and designed a hybrid teaching model to make online classes enjoyable with video lectures, i.e. Youtube.

Students commenced learning through online platforms like Zoom, Microsoft and Google Classroom, and a record surge in the number of people using these platforms increased gradually. These modes were practically non-existing before the pandemic hit the world. (Raheem, 2020)
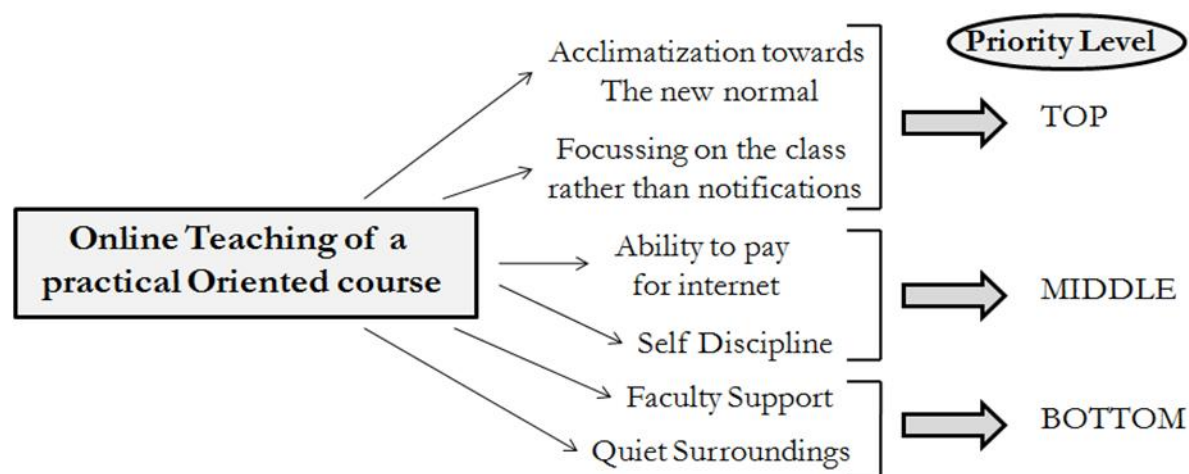

Figure 01: Descriptive model depicting suggested priority levels during online classes (Source: Author)

Figure 01 has been drawn by the author to represent the priority levels of online classes as the model depicts the three priority levels of online teaching, i.e., low, middle and top. Faculty support and quiet surroundings fall into low level, Self-discipline of students, ability to pay for Internet charges by the Institution, and ward's family fall into the middle level of priority and proper focus on the class contents by students to understand the concept considering it as New normal.

Literature review

Hotel education has been recognized as a motivating force for the economies that are still developing have aptly recognized the hotel sector as a driving force for growth and development (Mill & Morrison, 1999). India, a developing country, recognizes the potential of hotel and the tourism sector as a source of employment. (Honey & Gilpin, 2009). Due to pandemics, hotel and tourism educational institutions adopted a COVID-19 specific model and introduced a first of its kind. The count first academy of online tourism education named the North-East Tourism Academy (NETA) as a step to resuscitate the sector. This initiative is intended to improve management skills used in tourism, promote entrepreneurial acumen in tourism, and sector-specific research to support small-scale operators. (Bhutia, 2020) One study discusses the possibility of the amalgamation of Axiology in the studies relating to the tourism sector for effective transformation. (Edelheim, 2020). In the year 1984 Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India (MoT) was made responsible for India's hotel and hotel management courses, with NCHMCT emerging as an autonomous body. 'National Council for Hotel Management & Catering Technology (NCHMCT), a nodal and affiliating organization, started monitoring education standards for all the institutes run by the Government of India with standard syllabus and universal norms. During this phase, many food crafts Institutes were also upgraded to Hotel Management Institutes. Presently there are 21 central government colleges and 33 State Government colleges, along with many private colleges affiliated with NCHMCT. (Kumar, 2014)

COVID-19 pandemic posed many challenges to the faculties as well as students. The majority of the adult education techniques involve group work and practical activities. This was not feasible and practicable due to the lockdown. Imparting hotel skills that require practical exposure to understand different types of operations, i.e., chopping, cutting, cooking, boiling, poaching, broiling, welcoming, serving, dressing, designing, decorating etc., became cumbersome in theoretical form, later faculty members opted for demonstration sessions. During three years degree program in hotel and hotel administration, a hotel management professional is taught to utilize five senses, i.e., Sight, Sound, Smell, Taste, and Touch, to produce the best product. They also learn to use their sensory organs to check the cleanliness, supervision of the area, and sense hidden dangers. These skills could not have been offered without practical exposure in

core departments, i.e., low/high flame, food and beverages, welcoming guests, and other practical activities. Given the Covid-19 pandemic, the state government and nodal agencies decided to promote all first-year and first-semester students of the undergraduate and postgraduate levels enrolled in universities and degree colleges without exams. UGC guidelines for re-opening of universities and colleges post lockdown was developed for compliance by all the academic institutions

The focus was on intense academics as it might be possible for the parents to view the classes. Student-centric methods would help deliver a practical lecture, as the time of the lecture is also to be reduced from the usual 1 hour to 40 minutes for an online session. (Naik, 2020) The Semester end examinations were conducted through AON's platform Cocubes with a multiple-choice based question pattern, and live proctoring was done by faculty through accessing the student's system camera and microphone.

In a study conducted by Chhetri, Dambhare, & Kakkar, it was found out that 26.2% were not very satisfied by the online classes' effectiveness compared to classroom teaching, and only 18.9% were satisfied. 30.9% were satisfied with the course coverage, whereas 18.4% were not. Because of such a new teaching pedagogy, 41.3% were satisfied with the online lectures, PDFs and videos, whereas 6.5% were not. Teachers did their best to put the point forth, but sometimes just hearing is not enough to put the point across. Thus 28.9% understood the taught topics, whereas 19.9% were not. Lastly, support from the facilitator is essential throughout the curriculum, which might have been hampered in the case of online classes, evident from the 23% of the samples voting towards it, though about 50% voting that they were satisfied. The study had 411 samples to which a Likert scale was forwarded. The study also investigated specific challenges students face while taking online classes. The biggest challenge as per the study was technical issues while joining and attending the class with around 42% samples agreeing to it followed by lack of in-person interaction with the students, something which cannot be helped either way and lastly, distractions, which is common to have notifications & updates on laptops. **(**Chhetri**,** Dambhare**,** & Kakkar**,** 2020**)**

Specific skill sets will be prioritized for development to have a lasting career in hotel, and the teachers and facilitators need to focus on increasing fragility at one phase and changing the social values in the second phase. Resilience has to be developed, and some of the other skills required in the post-COVID time would be facility management, soft skills, and emotional intelligence. (EHL)

As per Di Pietro, any natural disaster, in this case, a pandemic, can create huge hassles and problems in people's daily lives, which can cause concentration lapse, anxiety, and stress. (Di Pietro, 2018) In a paper written by Dani, & Kukreti, Negi, & Kholiya, it was found out that almost 97% of the students were in agreement about how COVID has affected their internship programmes and the hotel and tourism industry on a global

scale. 73% of the students believed that the online teaching method was beneficial during the lockdown times, though 75% also agreed that they got full support from their facilitators. (Dani, & Kukreti, Negi, & Kholiya, 2020). In support of this, a study concluded that 80% of the samples agreed on the superiority of offline, face-to-face classes are more effective rather than online classes, and their preference lies with the former. (Sciarini, Beck, & Seaman, 2012)

Literature review suggests that online teaching in hotel was not explored before the pandemic. The research emphasizes that student engagement is low during online education, primarily due to Covid-19.

Sample analysis

A total sample base of 711 responses was received from the students of Hotel Management, although the scope of potential students was 2000+. The response rate can be related to the fact that questionnaires are often ignored even when the authors personally persuade the samples. (Brunt, Horner, & Semley, 2017) Students from all three years of Hotel Management colleges participated, and the demographics were as follows:

Demographic Profile

Year	No.of respondents	Percentage
1st year	436	61.3
2nd year	88	12.4
3rd year	187	26.3

Table 01: Demographic Classification

This table represents the no. of respondents/ students from each year of the course, and the data shows the maximum participation from students of 1st year with 61.3% or 436 samples, 3rd-year hotel management students followed by 26% respondents or 187 samples in the 3rd year and last,y 12.4% or 88 samples, forming the 2nd year students of the hotel course.

Gender	No.of respondents	Percentage
Male	555	78.1
Female	156	21.9

Table 02: Gender Classification

The table reflects maximum participation from male students with 78.1% responses or 555 samples and 21.9% or 156 sample participation from the female students.

Experience of online sessions

Experience	No.of respondents	Percentage
Yes	619	87.1
No	92	12.9

Table 03: Sample familiarity with online sessions

The table shows that 87% of students have already experienced online sessions, whereas 13% have not experienced it before.

Preference of Online Classes over Classroom Teaching

Preference	No.of respondents	Percentage
Yes	175	24.6
No	474	66.7
No difference	62	8.75

Table 04: Sample preferences in online vs classroom sessions

Students were asked if they would prefer online classes over classroom teaching; their responses reflect that 67% of students were against online classes, as it does not give them enough exposure to understand the practical aspects, followed by 25% who were in favour of the online sessions. The remaining 9% of students were unaffected by online/offline sessions, which does not make any difference even if the practical sessions are conducted online.

Reasons that make Online Classes preferable over Classroom Teaching

Reasons	Respondents	Percentage
Personal preference	111	15.6
The comfort of Home while Studying	262	36.8
More Flexibility	91	12.8
Induces Self-Reliance	37	5.2
Promotes Self-Study	142	20
Parents can Attend &Analyze	68	9.6

Table 05: Parameters of preference for Online Classes

Hotel Management students were asked why online sessions are preferable over classroom teaching. 37% of students opinionated that home comfort while studying makes it easy to attend the sessions. 16% of students prefer online sessions due to their personal preference, and 13% find an online mode more flexible. The reason voted lowest was 'induces self-reliance,' with only 5.9% of students voting for it as a preference over the offline classes.

Reasons that make Classroom Teaching preferable over Online Classes

Reasons	Respondents	Percentage
Traditionally Adapted	66	9.3
No Network Issues	115	16.2
Personal Attention	112	16
Better Concept Grasping	233	33
More Faculty Support	64	9
More Engaging	121	17

Table 06: Parameters of preference for Classroom Teaching

Students were cross-examined about why to opt for classroom teaching over online classes. 33% of students believed that they could understand the concepts easily in the class, 17% of students find this to be more engaging,16.2% of students feel that in the classroom, they do not have to face any network issues, and 16% feel that the classroom sessions are more engaging in comparison to online classes.

Problems faced while learning through an Online Class

Problems	Respondents	Percentage
Unstable Network	287	40.4
Power Cuts	26	3.7
Non-Habitual	57	8
Ineffective than Classroom Teaching	144	20.3
Difficult to Understand Concepts	137	19.3
Massive Confusion	60	8.4

Table 07: Hindrances samples faced in Online sessions

Students were asked if they faced any problems during online classes. From the responses, it was discovered that 40% of students face the problem of Unstable Networks. 20% of students feel they cannot concentrate due to their home environment. They find it ineffective than classroom teaching, as the teacher does not directly view them. 19% of students find it difficult to understand concepts, and 8% find it massive confusion.

Parameters about faculty

The variables that comprise the Perception of Faculty component were factor analyzed using Principal Component analysis after ascertaining the appropriateness of Factor analysis (Malhotra & Dash, 2016) using Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (significant at the 0.05 level) and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) statistic (>0.6). Factors with an eigenvalue more significant than one and loading of 0.5 and above were then rotated using varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization.

To summarize the information contained in the original variables, a smaller number of factors should be extracted. This research uses approaches based on eigenvalues (eigenvalue > 1) and Scree plot to determine the number of factors. To ensure that the variables for each of the factors were internally related, their Cronbach's coefficient alpha was measured and found to have acceptable internal consistency reliabilities, that is, greater than 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978)

Perception Factors

The Perception component comprised of 7 variables which were factor analyzed using Principal Component Analysis, and seven factors emerged explaining 86.62 percent of the Variance. The summary result of all the elements and sub-elements for the Satisfaction component is presented in Table 09.

The factor analysis yielded three dimensions labelled as 'Teaching Ability, 'Faculty Commitment,' & 'Classroom Engagement.'

Factors	Significant Variables	Factor Loadings	Item Mean	Factor Mean	Eigen Values	% of Variance	Coefficient alpha
F1: Teaching Ability	Ability to control the class	.842	3.21	3.26	5.28	75.5%	.901
	Putting the point across	.753	3.25				
	Doubt Addressing	.687	3.32				
F2: Faculty Commitment	Personal Support from Faculty	.842	3.20	3.35	1.45	6.47%	.857
	The faculty showed the interest	.761	3.49				
F3: Classroom Engagement	Class Engagement	.833	3.05	3.13	1.32	4.62%	.862
	Concept Clarity	.551	3.22				
Total Variance Explained		86.62 %					
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.938					
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		.000					

Table 08: Summary of Factor analysis results

Teaching Ability:

The first factor identified is 'Teaching Ability, which has a factor mean of 3.26 and consists of three items; Ability to control the class, Putting the point across and doubt addressing. This factor accounts for a 75.5 percent variance.

Faculty Commitment:
The second factor identified is 'Faculty Commitment,' which accounts for 6.47 percent variance, has a factor mean of 3.35 and consists of two items; Personal Support from Faculty and Interest shown by the faculty.

Classroom Engagement:
The third factor identified is 'Classroom Engagement,' which has a factor mean of 3.13 consists of two items; Class Engagement and Concept Clarity. This factor accounts for a 4.62 percent variance.

T-tests were conducted to assess whether male and female students were significantly different in terms of their perception of teaching ability, faculty commitment and classroom engagement. The summary of the t-test results is given in table 10.

	Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Teaching Ability	Female	156	3.2350	1.11053	.08891	-.349	267.541	.727
	Male	555	3.2709	1.21087	.05140			
Faculty Commitment	Female	156	3.3878	1.19350	.09556	.470	709	.639
	Male	555	3.3351	1.25039	.05308			
Classroom Engagement	Female	156	3.1186	1.15579	.09254	-.134	709	.893
	Male	555	3.1333	1.22926	.05218			

Table 9: Summary of T-Test- Faculty Perception (Source Author)

There was no significant difference observed in the case of perception of teaching ability (t(267.5) = -.349, p > .05), faculty commitment (t(709) = .470, p > .05) or classroom engagement (t(709) = -.134, p > .05).

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess whether students studying in different years differed significantly in their perception of teaching ability, faculty commitment and classroom engagement. The summary of the ANOVA results is presented in Table 11.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Score	F	Sig.
Teaching Ability	Between Groups	.422	2	.211	.149	.862
	Within Groups	1003.173	708	1.417		
	Total	1003.595	710			
Faculty Commitment	Between Groups	2.141	2	1.070	.698	.498
	Within Groups	1085.149	708	1.533		
	Total	1087.290	710			
Classroom Engagement	Between Groups	1.095	2	.548	.372	.690
	Within Groups	1043.120	708	1.473		
	Total	1044.216	710			

Table 10: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The students from the three different years of study did not differ significantly in terms of their perception of the faculty members' teaching ability ($F(2, 708) = .149$, $p > .05$), faculty commitment ($F(2, 708) = .698$, $p > .05$) or classroom engagement ($F(2, 708) = .149$, $p > .05$). High mean score(1.473) of classroom engagement signifies that students are influenced by the faculty's capabilitiy of making the sessions interesting and engaging.

Interpretation

This research study revolves around the efficacy of online teaching sessions in a practical-oriented course, i.e. hotel and hotel administration. Results of the Statistical test present the findings in the Indian context. The paper introduced a brief history and the current online-teaching trends followed in the country during the Covid-19 pandemic. Analysis of Variance(ANOVA) implies that faculty commitment in online education is a significant factor; faculty should give personal attention to students to understand the concepts. Due to pandemic situations, students are unable to connect with faculty.

Suggestions

A mixed blend of online and offline teaching can solve the issues of hotel students. Hotel Management is a practical-oriented course that needs more practical exposure than theoretical sessions. There are two central departments and four core subjects taught in hotel management courses across India: Food Production and Food & Beverage Service consisting of the Food & Beverage (F&B) Department and Front Office & Housekeeping

consisting of the Rooms Division Department. If students find it challenging to understand, they can observe videos for better grasping and participation in virtual practical activities. They can be asked to procure raw cooking ingredients for food production practical sessions, and for better adoption of this blended approach, the syllabus has to be fine-tuned as per the convenience of procuring the ingredients and simplifying the technique which can be executed in a home kitchen.

In addition, it is suggested to give real-time cooking demonstrations by faculty to the students through online platforms to grasp the concepts better. Similarly, cook-along could be organized by the college so that the student prepares the dishes at home and the faculty, cooking at the campus, students need to be involved in making them understand the concepts. For other subjects like a Front office where reservations and bookings are taught on software which is usually paid, technology can again be the saviour and the platform 'Any desk' can be used to access software-loaded college computers which can be accessed from the student at his house. Housekeeping practicals would be relatively easy to conduct as bedmaking and flower arrangement is very much possible in online sessions. Lastly, the Food & Beverage service, table laying, clearance and beverage service mocks can again be efficiently conducted as cutlery, crockery, and flatware are available at homes.

Conclusion

This exploratory paper was set to find out the COVID effect on a skill-based course like hotel in the context of India. This country is still affected by factors like unstable internet, evident as 287 samples, i.e., about 40% of the sample base voted for this reason under the significant problems faced in online education. Although the literature base set the tone with the recent trends in hotel education, it was evident that apart from switching platforms, no pedagogy changes were witnessed, opposite to the tourism education where an exclusive online academy was inaugurated to adopt the new normal. A Likert's scale was used to measure parameters on classroom over online teaching where 233 samples voted for 'better concept grasping,' online teaching over a classroom where 263 samples voted for 'the comfort of home while studying and the problems faced during online teaching.

The faculty parameters were analyzed with Factor analysis, which yielded that faculty commitment is of the highest importance along with the significant factors of faculty's support and the interest shown by the faculty.

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